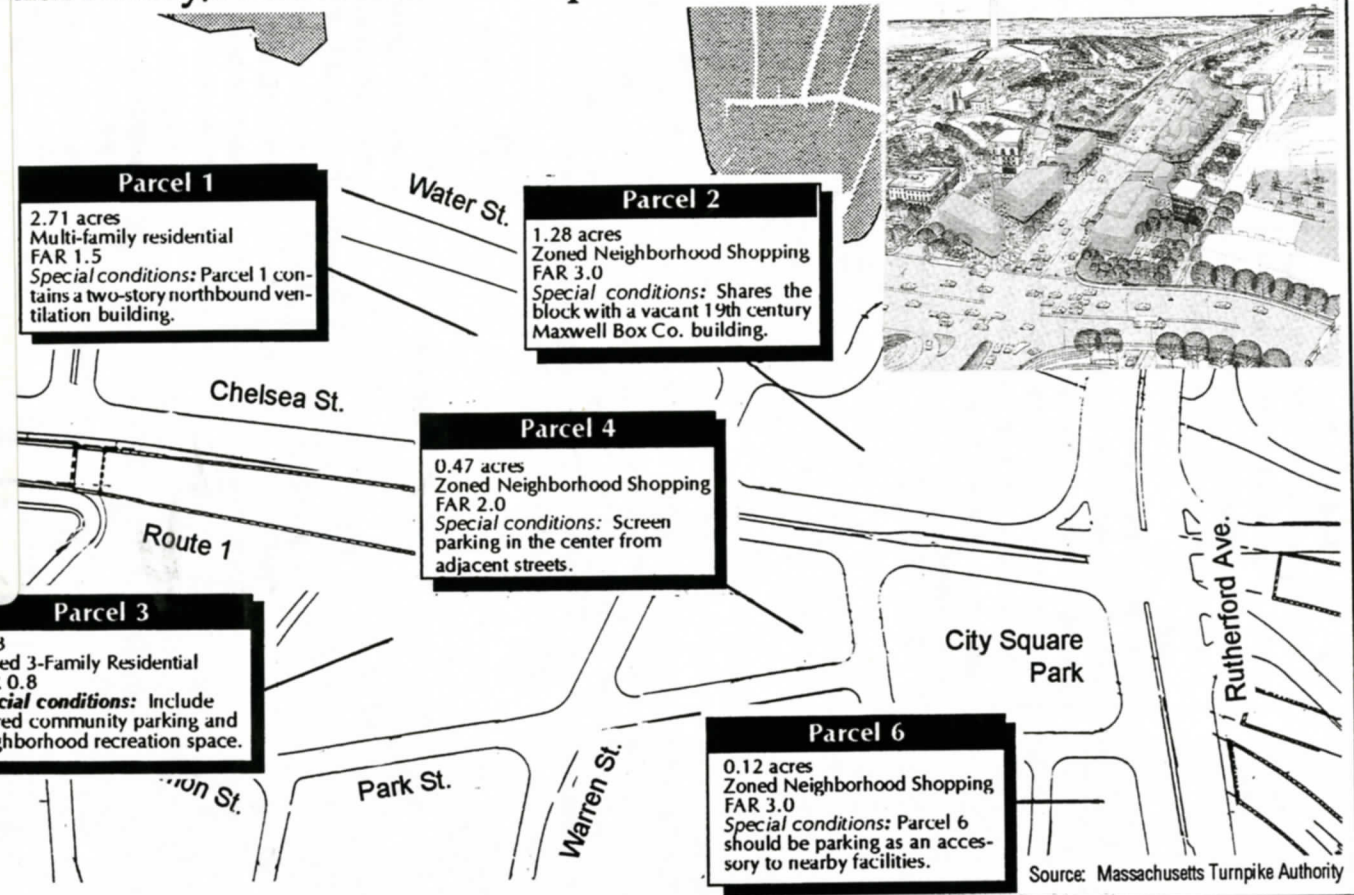


Central Artery/North Area Development Parcels

CHARLESTOWN 1999

LIBRARY
BOSTON ARCHITECTURAL CENTER



Charlestown 1999—In 1977, when planning for the removal of elevated ramps over City Square in Charlestown was in full swing, a plan created for the redevelopment of the City Square area was labeled "Charlestown 1999." Construction of the North Area Central Artery project had not yet begun, and the Charlestown community was just starting to put its vision for the restored City Square on paper. Major construction began in 1987 and the project—underground ramps and two ventilation buildings—opened in 1993.

Now, the parcels of land created by removal of the elevated ramps and supports are available to be developed. Although the Massachusetts Highway Department was the agency responsible for the North Area project, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority now owns the land. In December 1998 the Turnpike Authority issued a request for proposals (RFP) from developers for five parcels. This RFP was issued some 23 years after planning began.

In April, 27 proposals from 16 developers were received and reviewed by the Charlestown Neighborhood Council and the Charlestown community. The RFP describes the parcel zoning, design guidelines, access, and environmental issues for each parcel. The parcel guidelines—use, vehicular access, view-corridor protection, parking, etc.—were developed in 1986 and up-

dated in 1996 by the community and the Massachusetts Highway Department. The Neighborhood Council recommended finalists to the Turnpike Authority in May, and three developers were selected in late July:

- **Parcel 1:** Constitution Development Associates—117 condominiums (12 affordable), 316 underground parking spaces, including 72 for the Boston National Historical Park.
- **Parcel 3:** Park Place Development—16 condominiums (2 affordable), surface parking for 38 cars, small park.
- **Parcel 6:** Constitution Wharf Partners (conditional)—6 condominiums (1 affordable), 12 underground parking spaces.

Comparisons between the Charlestown parcel-development process and what could occur with the mainline parcels provide food for thought. Although the "Charlestown 1999" vision was first developed in 1977, construction didn't actually begin until 1987 and the parcels were not actually available until 1994 when the project was complete. Almost five years after the highway project was completed, the request for proposals was issued. If a similar timeline could be expected for the mainline parcels, the Turnpike Authority could be advertising for developers in 2008, about five years after the CA/T project is supposed to be done, and long after the intensive parcel-planning process that began in the early 1990s.

People Movers

Lowell Richards, from assistant secretary of Mass. Dept. of Administration and Finance to chief development officer for Massport (succeeds Daniel Forsberg).

Daniel Forsberg, former Massport chief development officer is now the head of the Worcester Business Roundtable.

Lark Jurev Palermo, from commissioner of the state Division of Capital Asset Management, to Peabody and Arnold, lawyers.

James Rooney, from MassPike CFO to chief of staff for Mayor Menino.

Deborah Hadden, from Massport to Fort Point Associates.

Scott Darling, from Fort Point Associates, to Conservation Law Foundation.

Abner Mason, from Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) to MBTA deputy general manager.

Margaret O'Meara, from MHD District 3 to MHD assistant commissioner for policy.

David Weiner of Edwards and Kelcey has retired.

Lauren Liss, from EOTC deputy secretary for environmental policy to commissioner of the state Dept. of Environmental Protection.

Betsy Shure Gross was appointed Special Assistant for Community Preservation at Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA).

Art Bergeron was appointed First Assistant at EOEA.

Goodkind & O'Dea Inc., a Rutherford, NJ, engineering company has been acquired by Boston-based architectural and engineering consulting firm Anderson-Nichols and Co. Inc.

URS Greiner Woodward Clyde has acquired Dames & Moore.

Lynn Ahlgren, from MBTA Planning to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin.

1 Hotel Update—Although interest in opening new hotels in Boston is still strong, several hotel proposals appear to have been postponed for undetermined periods, but new projects have been proposed.

While the proposed 270-room Piano Row (Boylston Street) hotel is delayed, a second Hyatt hotel proposed for the Fan Pier and the Convention Center hotel with 1,000–1,200 rooms help bring the total hotel rooms that will be built to 4,190–4,440 rooms.

2 Construction of a new tower at Prudential Center is underway. Demolition of parking areas, Ground Round restaurant, and several internal walkways for Boston Properties' new 111 Huntington Avenue Tower can be seen from Huntington Avenue where the rear plaza is closed off. The 36-story, \$125 million office and retail tower is expected to be completed in 2001 and will have a "jazzed up" top, as described by the developers. The top, which has been called a dome, is actually a series of two-dimensional struts that make a dome-like appearance. The "little Pru," 101 Huntington, will sport a new top, too. The architects, CBT, searched the country for ideas for tops for towers and landed on the dome concept.

Directly across Huntington Avenue the Druker Company is breaking ground for a \$40 million, 20-story luxury residential tower adjacent to the Colonnade Hotel. Perhaps Huntington Avenue will soon have air rights, too.

3 "Slingshot Ramp" proposed for Back Bay Turnpike access—The City of Boston, working with the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, is reviewing air rights development issues and opportunities on the MassPike Extension. A subcommittee is also focusing on the east/west transportation access which includes access to and from the new South Boston Convention Center and Back Bay.

One suggestion from the review process is what is called the "Slingshot Ramp" or U-Turn, that would be located west of Massachusetts Avenue. The ramp and turnback system would come off the westbound Turnpike leading to a loop located over the Turnpike and railroad tracks and connecting to a ramp heading east. Drivers on this loop would be on the Turnpike at all times and would not use local streets. Drivers on the westbound Turnpike wanting to access the Back Bay would follow this loop and exit at the existing eastbound off-ramps at Copley Place and Prudential. According to the City, the "Slingshot Ramp" is currently only a conceptual one-line sketch and details of roadway geometry, traffic movements and constructability will be examined as the review continues.

4 Dartmouth Street southbound in front of the Boston Public Library is proposed to be shut down and turned into a paved pedestrian plaza through a project funded by the City and Massachusetts Highway Department. Automobile traffic on that stretch of Dartmouth Street is light, but pedestrian traffic jaywalking mid-block is quite heavy. The plan would eliminate the three travel lanes and install "seasonal" planters and a kiosk on the paved area. On the stretch of Dartmouth Street adjacent to Copley Square Park, the existing pedestrian refuge island at Boylston Street would be

eliminated to simplify pedestrian crossing. At the Huntington/Dartmouth intersection, the existing pedestrian refuge at the Westin Hotel entrance would be almost doubled and the width of the crossing to the library narrowed considerably. Neckdowns and new signals are also included.

The plan makes great strides at improving pedestrian conditions in Copley Square. However, it is quite different from earlier plans that went beyond simply paving over the roadway, adding a landscaped green space. The \$1.5 million project may be completed by late 2000.

Central Artery Surface Restoration...

The layout and design of the main roadways and cross-streets after the Central Artery is depressed have essentially been completed, together with plans for sidewalks, streetlights, benches and 2,400 new trees.

Still remaining is the final planning for the interior of the land parcels covering the depressed roadway. The 1991 environmental certificate approving the Artery project called for 75 percent of the parcels to be "open space" (undefined), with some buildings in the North End and Bulfinch Triangle. Since then "open space" has been assumed to be any space open to the public, even with an entry fee, whether built on or not. This accommodates the Massachusetts Horticultural Society plans for buildings and an arboretum on three parcels near Dewey Square. Covering ramp parcels was also required in the approval certificate.

There have been several previous attempts to plan the surface parcels, most notably the Boston 2000 plan. Recently a number of abutter groups have been formed to plan anew. Working now are groups in the North End, Financial/Waterfront, Dewey Square, Leather District and Chinatown. At present,

there is no central authority overseeing the planning, although a bill in the legislature would create one.

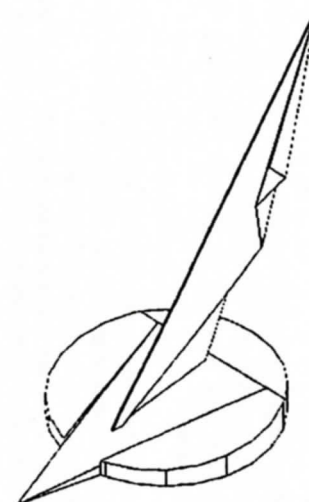
The cost of both planning and restoration is an issue. The federal government will pay only for "loam and seed." MassPike is cutting funds for restoration as the tunnel construction runs over budget, federal participation decreased, and the state debt to fund the project soars.

Boston 2000 cost estimates for restoring the parcels were \$40 million–\$60 million in capital costs and \$4 million–\$6 million per year for maintenance. MassPike has promised only \$15 million in capital costs and nothing for maintenance, with the premise that private funding will be forthcoming.

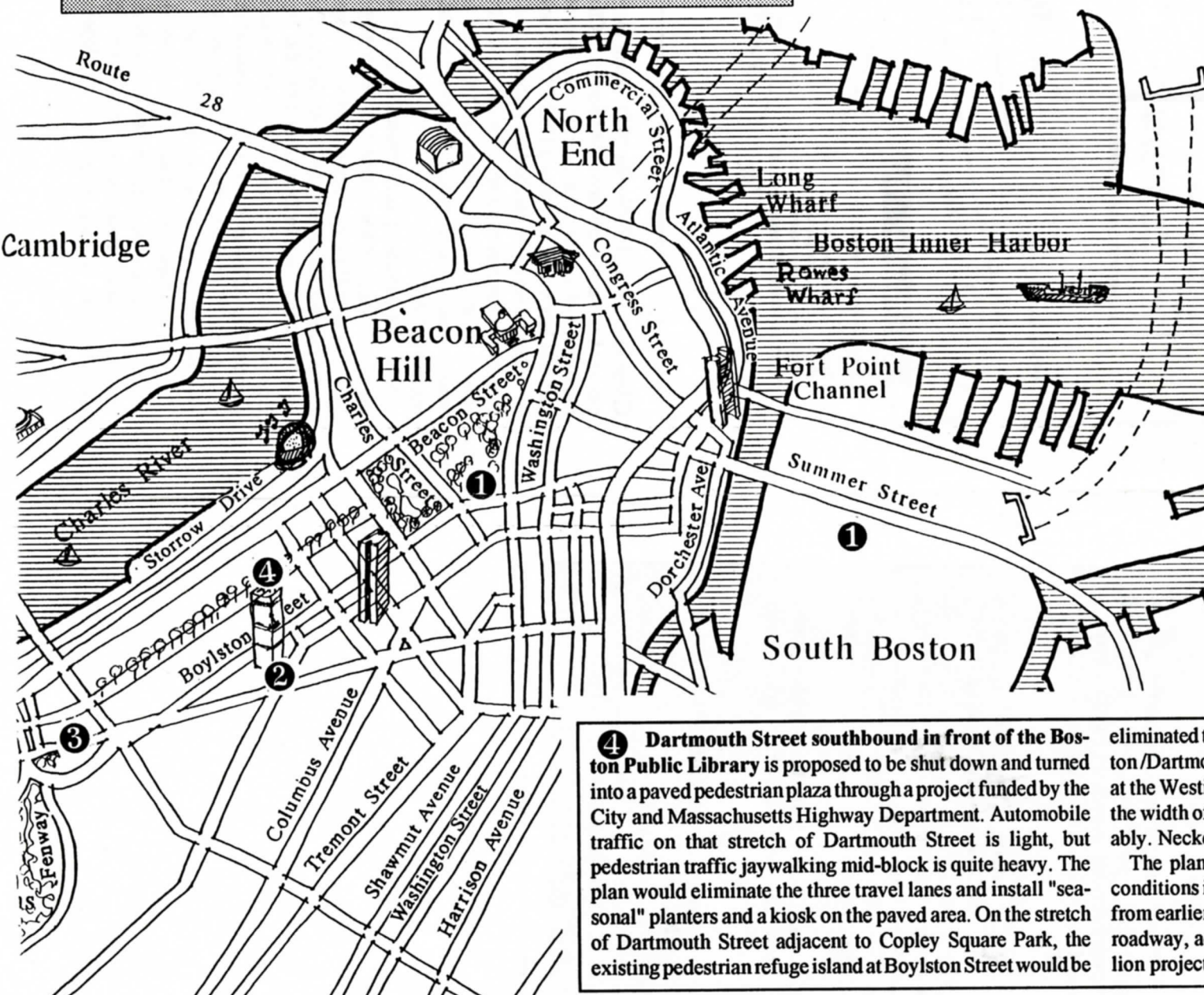
Critics have pointed out a lack of proportion in spending \$11 billion to build the highway system and \$15 million on the most visible and lasting part of the project—beautifying and reuniting the city, which was one of the major justifications for the project.

A memorial in Ramsay Park near the new Jim Rice Field on Washington Street in Lower Roxbury will soon be finished honoring the park's namesake, **Capt. David Ramsay**. Capt. Ramsay, a graduate of Boston English High and West Point and a highly decorated Air Force pilot, was shot down and killed in Viet Nam in 1970. Designed by Valerie Maynard with Reginald L. Jackson, the memorial is a stainless steel sculpture called "AirFoil" mounted on a black granite base. Five black granite ovals, each 30 inches high and 38 inches wide, will tell the story of Capt. Ramsay.

The Veterans Benefit Clearinghouse and Ramsay Post 8772 are the project's sponsors, and it is funded by The Browne Fund and The Henderson Foundation.



Source: Olaleye Communications, Inc.



THE CA/T

NUMBERS

GAME

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The Central Artery/Tunnel (CA/T) Project is often thought of as a project to fix existing highway problems by depressing elevated roadway and adding a third harbor crossing. However, addressing problems with the existing Central Artery requires a much more complex system of ramps, roadways, and structures than ever existed. Examples of major changes and improvements to the Central Artery include fixing historically poor connections to the Sumner and Callahan tunnels, expanding surface roads to address the removal of ramp access to the downtown, and adding ramps and tunnels to try to eliminate horrific congestion at Leverett Circle.

Consequently, what is seen by some as a project to hide the roadway by putting it underground is actually considerably different. In fact, when the project is completed, the total length of elevated roadway (including ramps) will have increased by about 68 percent over existing conditions before the project began.

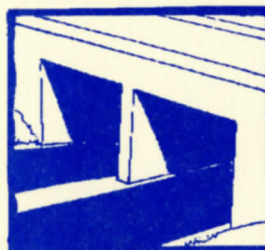
Overall, including the Ted Williams Tunnel and ramps, the total length of roadway in the CA/T Project—45 miles—will represent an increase of almost 300 percent over what exists today. The amount of roadway in tunnels will grow to approximately 15 miles, an increase of almost 1200 percent, and the amount of surface roadway created will expanded from 1.61 miles to over 12 miles, a 650 percent increase.

However, in pre-CA/T conditions, tunnels represented 10 percent of the total length of roadway; in the CA/T Project, it will be 33 percent. Elevated roadway will decrease to 30 percent from 70 percent before the project (see below). Also shown is the percentage of "boat sections," the transition sections between tunnels and the surface, which increase under the CA/T project.



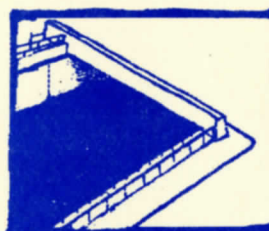
Elevated:

Existing: 70%
CA/T Project: 30%



Tunnel:

Existing: 10%
CA/T Project: 33%



Boat Section:

Existing: 6%
CA/T Project: 10%

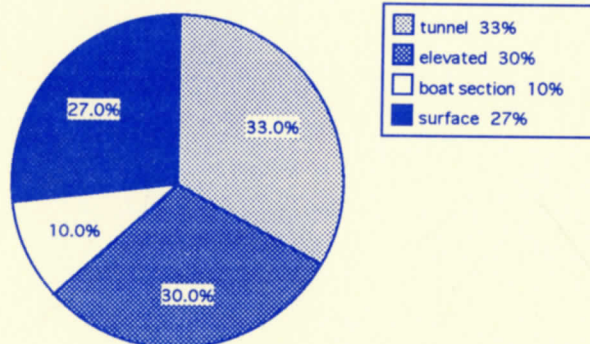


Surface:

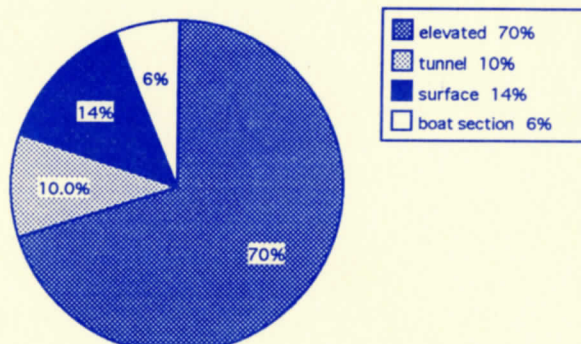
Existing: 14%
CA/T Project: 27%

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**After Central Artery/
Tunnel Project**



**Before Central Artery/
Tunnel Project**



Welcome to The Boston Informer!

The goal is simple: provide concise public information on construction projects, planning initiatives, and whatever else affects living and working in Boston. Welcome to *The Boston Informer*!

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City Reveals Plans for New "Slingshot Ramp" for Turnpike Access to Back Bay

You were asking...

- Q. What are the latest plans for the former Planet Hollywood building in Back Bay?**
- A.** In what appears to be the final disposition of the property at 801 Boylston St., Atlantic Retail Properties of Waltham paid \$6.75 million to buy the five-story building from financially ailing Planet Hollywood. Fidelity Investments will be the lead tenant on the upper floors with retail likely on the ground floor.
- Q. What is the difference between the Seaport District and the South Boston Waterfront?**
- A.** Political clout.
- Q. I hear the City finalized its Streetscape Guidelines describing preferred pedestrian and streetscape treatment. How can I get a copy?**
- A.** Call Vineet Gupta, Boston Transportation Department, at 635-2756.
- Q. Recently, very late at night, I've seen huge cranes outside Macy's at Downtown Crossing. What's going on?**
- A.** Rumors are that the top six floors—four selling floors and two administrative—will not be renovated and leased out as office space. Instead, the top six floors will house telecommunications equipment and Macy's will lease the basement, first, and second floors from the building's new owner for its retail store. October is the date for the big changes.
- Q. Are The Boston Informer and ATC Information, Inc. "Y2K Compliant"?**
- A.** Probably, since we're Macintosh-based, but if not, you will be getting a very interesting newsletter on developments in Boston in the 1900s.

THE BOSTON INFORMER

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